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UNCLAS ABUJA 000277

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT ALSO PASS TO USTR FOR PATRICK COLEMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: REP. JEFFERSON'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT OBASANJO,
AGREEMENT FOR CAMPBELL

REF: 03 ABUJA 2231 AND ABUJA FAX 12/16/03 TO USTR AND

AF/W

1. President Obasanjo told visiting Congressman Jefferson, Charge Anyaso and notetakers February 16 that Nigeria has provided all necessary documents and legislation to the USG for the AGOA textiles visa (reftel and ref faxes), and considers the ball to be in the USG court. Obasanjo agreed with Jefferson that Nigeria needed to work on exporting more processed agricultural goods such as tomatoes and fruits, to make more use of what is already available under AGOA, and will work on exporting software and footwear as well. Jefferson suggested industrial starch, which could be made from Nigeria's cassavas.

2. At the end of the meeting, Obasanjo told the CDA that he had signed the agreement for John Campbell to become the U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria. (Note: Post received the paperwork and faxed it to the Department on February 17. End Note.)

3. Rep. Jefferson, on a private visit to Nigeria, said he was interested in the Gulf of Guinea Initiative, which President Obasanjo co-chairs. Obasanjo said he had just been speaking with Gabon's President Bongo, and expected to visit Bongo by the end of March. Ghana wanted to join the Initiative, and Nigeria would not object to Ghana and even Senegal becoming members. The purpose, Obasanjo said, was to preserve peace and "stability of resources."

4. Rep. Jefferson suggested to President Obasanjo that U.S. firms were interested in investing to build fertilizer plants in Nigeria if the GON could provide no-cost or low-cost liquefied natural gas (LNG) until the U.S. firms recouped the cost of building the factories. Obasanjo said he was interested, and asked Jefferson to send him a paper on such a proposal. Obasanjo also said he would consider an offer by the Black Caucus Foundation to be their guest of honor at a conference in September if it was near enough to Obasanjo's planned visit to the U.S. for the UN General Assembly.
ROBERTS